

through the gigantic monuments of ancient Borne. The Vatican district round St. Peter's, on the other side of the river, hitherto an occasional residence only, was chosen as the permanent seat of the Papacy, partly on account of its proximity in time of danger to the vast Mausoleum of the Emperor Hadrian, then known and used as the fortress of St. Angelo. Opposite his new quarters, Gregory the Eleventh could still see across the Tiber the Campus Martius of antiquity, studded with the ruins of theatre and circus, destined too soon to be buried for ever by the squalid alleys of the Papal town. Before he had been many months in those strange surroundings, so different from Avignon, so different from any other spot on earth, Gregory was induced to interest himself in the danger to which the Church was exposed in England, and to issue bulls in condemnation of the teaching of John Wycliffe.<sup>1</sup>

Although the English Church had never repudiated the authority of Rome, she had in the days of Henry the Third ventured to complain of Papal abuses, and, above all, of Papal taxation.<sup>2</sup> As long as she was popular and respected in England she could afford to air her grievances against the Pope. But now that times had changed, danger drove the English prelates to shelter themselves behind the Papacy, in which, even in those days of its utter degradation, they found a strong moral support. England was not sufficiently powerful and self-confident to stand alone in completely repudiating the most fundamental idea of medieval thought—the European Catholicity of the Church. Of this idea the Vicar of Christ was the outward and visible sign. Behind him and his authority the English Bishops sought refuge in the day of trouble. Bishop Courtenay, the great defender of the Church at home, was also the great champion of the Papal claims. He knew, whether by reason or by instinct, that the place occupied by the Church of England in medieval life, long unpopular and now denounced by Wycliffe and threatened by politicians, must stand or fall with the power of the Pope.

<sup>1</sup> For this account of the residence at Avignon\* see Sismondi's *Hist.* d&t, tomes ix. x. xi; Sismondi's *Hist.* dts XtApub. Italitnnu, chaps. Michelet, tome iii. eel. lftOl.  
<sup>2</sup> Maitland, *Canon Law*, passim, e.g. pp. 78&.